

Remarks

Claims 1, 3, 4, 11, 14-16, and 18 have been amended. Claims 1-19 are pending in the application and are presented for further consideration.

Section 102(b) rejections

Claims 1-3, 11, 12, 14, 15, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Taylor (U.S. 1,705,050); Claims 16 and 17 are rejected as being anticipated by Dowdle (U.S. 6,196,033); and Claims 1-5, 7-10, 14, 15, and 18 are rejected as being anticipated by Niehaus (U.S. 4,735,246). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as none of the cited references disclose a cord lock as defined in the specification (Figure 3 and page 5, lines 4-19) and further identified in the amended claims. Claim 1, as amended, recites:

a plurality of cord locks attached to the material, wherein each cord lock comprises an adjustable loop and a locking means, the loop configured to receive usable lengths of skeins therethrough, the locking means having a lock position and a release position, wherein in the release position, the loop can be adjusted in size and wherein in the lock position, the loop is not adjustable.

The remaining independent claims have a similar recitation. Claim 11 recites Cord locks as

Taylor discloses a filament container having a plurality of housings 2. Each housing has fabric strips 3 and 4 secured along a longitudinal edge to the base. In use, skeins of silk are arranged in the housing between strips 3 and 4 and tongues 7 are passed across the tops of the skeins of silk to slits 6 of section 3 and backwardly over the section to strips 10. The Examiner equates housings 2 to the cord locks of the claimed invention. This is improper. As described in the specification and the amended claims, the cord locks have a loop through which the skeins are threaded and held. Taylor does not disclose the skeins positioned through a loop. In Taylor, the skeins are "wrapped" in the housing. A purpose of the present invention is that individual skeins can be removed from the loop without the need to take out all of the skeins. In Taylor, to take

out a single skein, housing 2 will need to be unwrapped and the entire batch of skeins removed. Taylor does not disclose the cord locks of the present invention.

Dowdle describes a restraining device employing bundling ties. The Examiner equates the bundling ties 14 of Dowdle to the cord locks of the present invention. Claim 16 and 17, as amended, recites a cord lock having "a release position, wherein in the release position, the loop can be adjusted in size to increase or decrease the diameter of the loop." The restraining device of Dowdle cannot be released to increase the diameter of the loop. If an adjustment to increase the diameter of the loop were possible, the detainee could escape. Accordingly, the free ends 20 can be drawn in a downward direction, as shown in Figure 1, so that the loop constricts over the wrists until escape from restraint is not feasible. To avoid escape, the loop cannot be widened once it has been constricted over the detainee's wrists.

In contrast, the cord lock of the present invention is adjustable to increase, as well as decrease, the diameter of the loop. To remove a skein, the lock mechanism is released and the loop is widened to allow an individual skein to be removed without having to remove all of the skeins. If the Dowdle device was used to hold the skeins, it would not be possible to widen the loop to remove a skein. Accordingly, claim 16 is distinguishable over Dowdle. Claim 17 depends on claim 16 and contains additional patentable features.

Niehaus discloses a jewelry display and storage receptacle having VELCRO fasteners 36. The Examiner equates the VELCRO fasteners of Niehaus to the cord locks of the present invention. This is improper. The Velcro fasteners of Niehaus have a rough surface. If used in the present invention, Velcro fasteners would mar the skeins of yarn rendering them unusable. VELCRO fasteners are not the same as cord locks and cannot be substituted for cord locks in the present invention. A cord lock, as described in the claims and specification, includes a button 32 positioned in a housing 34 biased by a spring. A cord is looped through the housing. Pressing button 32 releases the cord and the size of the loop can be adjusted. When the button 32 is released, the cord is securely held thus fixing the size of the loop. See Specification, page 5, lines 5-19.

} fixes
cord lock

Section 103(a) rejections

Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 13 are rejected as being unpatentable over Taylor in view of Wirth (U.S. 4,662,517); Claim 6 is rejected as being unpatentable over Niehaus in view of Dunn (U.S. 4,466,534); and Claim 19 is rejected as being unpatentable over Taylor in view of Mathews. As discussed above, neither Taylor nor Niehaus disclose the cord locks of the present invention. Wirth is cited for its disclosure of end straps. Dunn is cited for its use of a black inner surface. Mathews is cited for its disclosure of a panel that is a notebook page. Wirth, Dunn and Mathews do not disclose the cord locks of the present invention. Accordingly, the claims are distinguishable over the cited references as none of the references disclose the cord locks of the present invention.

Telephone Interview

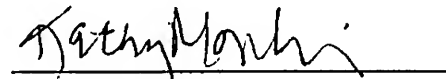
During a telephone interview on August 5, 2003, Examiner Pickett indicated that the foregoing amendments and remarks were sufficient to overcome the present rejections.

Concluding Remarks

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claims be reconsidered and withdrawn, and that the application be passed to allowance. Should there be any questions regarding this application, Examiner Pickett is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the phone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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